

Defining the Characteristics of the Universal Museum: Missions, Collections, and Size

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**Abstract**

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The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the characteristics of the universal museum as they apply to the institution's mission, collections, and overall size. The universal museum has continued to evolve since the first museums started to form in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, renewed interest and disagreement has occurred within the museum community over the universal museum's involvement in the debate on cultural property. This debate has led to many theories and opinions by individuals on what a universal museum is and what it should practice. This research was meant to provide clarification of the audience and global outlook of mission statements, the quality of collections, and scope of the resources of a universal museum and if it is a separate category of museum.

To examine these characteristics, a group of nine American universal museums were compared and contrasted to nine museums with similar collection practices and in similar geographic locations. A document analysis of these institutions' mission and value statements

and IRS Forms 990 forms were used to explore missions, collection practices, and size of institution. The research shows universal museums have the same characteristics of the stated audience and global outlook in missions and collections standards but very greatly in size and the amount of resources available to them compared to other museums. These results make the universal museum appear less of a different category of institution but more of a group of large institutions trying to claim special justification for contested practices surrounding the debate on cultural property.

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## ***I. Introduction***

The purpose of this research is to identify and describe the characteristics of a new category of museum called the universal museum. The method will be to compare and contrast the mission and financial statements of those museums calling themselves universal museums with a sample group of other institutions. The three main questions it will address are what are the similarities and differences in the characteristics of the missions, collections, and overall size between the two groups.

In January 2003, Martin Bailey reported in *The Art Newspaper* that directors from 40 of the world's largest museums and galleries met to discuss the important issues that were facing their institutions. The concern that was reported to have taken center stage was how directors were facing increasing number of requests for repatriation of objects from their respective collections. Those concerns were drafted into a document entitled the *Declaration on the Importance and Value of the Universal Museums* and was supported by 30 of those institutions and signed by 19 including five of the world's leading museums: the Metropolitan, the Louvre, the Hermitage, the State Museums of Berlin, and the British Museum.<sup>1</sup> Although the original goal of the directors was to raise awareness within both the museum community and the public as to how large institutions should consider repatriation and view their collections, by placing their institutions in the *Declaration* they also placed their museums under a specific category: the universal museum.<sup>2</sup> This term created both discussion and disagreement as reported by Charlotte Higgins, the chief arts writer for the British newspaper *The Guardian*, who remarked that many of the directors who had signed the document still could not give a clear definition of what the 'universal' in universal museum meant. Charlotte Higgins reported that Mikhail Piotrovsky, the

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<sup>1</sup> Bailey, Martin. "We serve all cultures, say the big, global museums." *The Art Newspaper*, January 2003.

<sup>2</sup> *Declaration on the Importance and Value of the Universal Museums*. December 8, 2002.

director of the Hermitage, told her it had to do with mass education while Karl Friedrich Schinkel of Berlin's States Museums said it was only through studying art that people move towards a kind of perfection.<sup>3</sup> Mark O'Neill, Director of the Glasgow Museums, criticized the declaration and its supporters by pointing out that it merely highlighted repatriation as a practice and although important it did little to define what was meant by the term 'universal museum'.<sup>4</sup> Geoffrey Lewis, Chair of the International Council of Museums Ethics Committee, posed a critique of the designation by stating:

The real purpose of the *Declaration* was, however, to establish a higher degree of immunity for claims for the repatriation of objects from the collections of these museums. The presumption that a museum with universally defined objectives may be considered exempt from such demands is specious. The Declaration is a statement of self-interest...they do not, as they imply, speak for the 'international museum community.'<sup>5</sup>

Christina Kreps, Director of Museums Studies and Museum of Anthropology at the University of Denver, explained that because there is contention over the term universal museum work must be done by the museum community to define it. She explained this need to her own specialized part of the museum field that "academic and museum anthropologists should not sit idly by and let those who possess the most power and resources ultimately determine the answer to this question...Indeed, much is at stake."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Higgins, Charlotte. "Arts: Forget marches and party politics. If you really want to change the world, become a museum director." *The Guardian*, Nov. 27, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> O'Neill, Mark. "Enlightenment Museums: Universal or Merely Global?" *Museums and Society*, vol. 2, 3 (Nov. 2004): 191.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis, Geoffrey. "The Universal Museum: a Special Case?" *ICOM NEWS*, no. 1 (2004): 3.

<sup>6</sup> Kreps, Christina. Review: *Who Owns the Past? Cultural Policy, Cultural Property and the Law*, ed. Kate Fitz Gibbon. [New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005. *Museum Anthropology Review*, (July 2007)] <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/1825>.

## ***II. Literature Review***

This literature review seeks to explore the existing resources that have been published on the topic of universal museums. The first section of the literature review describes the historical context and development of universal museums. The second section synthesizes how the debate on cultural property has framed the current debate on universal museums. The third section explores what the mission of a universal museum is. Finally, the fourth section details the types and practices of the collections of the universal museum.

### ***A. Historical Context***

This first section of the literature review explores the works published on historical references to the term universal museum. This research is sorted not by date published but by the chronological development of the universal museum.

The late Stephen E. Weil and former senior scholar emeritus at the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies explained that universal museums were established beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. In his article, “From Being *about* Something to Being *for* Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum,” in *Daedalus*, the universal museum developed when private collectors began amassing collections that varied in shape and scope depending on collectors’ personal tastes.<sup>7</sup> These *Kunst und Wunderkammern*, as Antonio Paolucci the current director of the Vatican Museums puts it in *Great Museums of Europe: The Dream of the Universal Museum*, were “all-encompassing and congested models of the ‘universal museum’ ”<sup>8</sup> that were part of collections of influential and powerful Europeans.

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<sup>7</sup> Weil, Stephen E. “From Being *about* Something to Being *for* Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum.” *Daedalus*, vol. 128. no. 3 (Summer 1999): 246.

<sup>8</sup> Paolucci, Antonio. “Forward: Models and Functions of European Museums.” *Great Museums of Europe: The Dream of the Universal Museum*. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2002): 9.

Paolucci explains few of these collections survive in their original form since many were broken up or destroyed in later centuries.<sup>9</sup> However, these large collections were followed by the 18<sup>th</sup> century's Enlightenment museum according to Neil MacGregor, the current director of the British Museum. In *Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century*, Neil MacGregor explains that these Enlightenment museums were also universal museums. The Enlightenment refined the process of collecting by providing a method to make links between objects and specimens resulting in deeper understanding of everything from the development of civilizations to a universal religion.<sup>10</sup> This older version of the universal museum originally collected natural specimens before branching out to collect archeological specimens and then works of art. The goal was to house all sciences and arts under one roof and to make sense of it by using the newly formed principles of classification and taxonomy.<sup>11</sup> Because of this process of systematic cataloging, James Cuno, the former Director of the Art Institute of Chicago and current President of the J. Paul Getty Trust, explains that the universal museum became synonymous with the encyclopedic museum. In his work *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*, Cuno explains that the goal of these institutions in the Enlightenment was that "they compromise collections meant to represent the world's diversity, and they organize and classify that diversity for ready, public access."<sup>12</sup>

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Enlightenment model of the universal museum was partially abandoned. According to Antonio Paolucci, this happened for the simple reason that people saw

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<sup>9</sup> Paolucci, Antonio. 9.

<sup>10</sup> MacGregor, Neil. "Preface." *Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Kim Sloan with Andrew Burnett. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2003): 7.

<sup>11</sup> Sloan, Kim. "'Aimed at Universality and Belonging to the nation': The Enlightenment and the British Museum." *Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century*. ed. Kim Sloan with Andrew Burnett. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2003): 13-14.

<sup>12</sup> Cuno, James. *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008): 140.

it as an “unattainable dream”<sup>13</sup> because there was simply no way one building could house one example of the entire natural and human world under one roof. Instead many of these institutions would go on to specialize in one interest or another.<sup>14</sup> Another reason for the change to more specialized museums was the rise of nationalism. Geoffrey Lewis points out in an article entitled “The ‘Universal Museum’: A Case of Special Pleading?” that with the rise of nationalism, countries began to compete with one another and became increasingly concerned with showcasing their achievements in art, science, and industry. This played out in the new national museums and collections.<sup>15</sup> These museums were not just meant to showcase a nation’s diverse collection of art or natural specimens but also to allow national museums to narrow their focus to specific geographical regions. Lewis says in an article, “A Debated Museum Concept: Partnership in Universality,” that this allowed a nation to use the museum to create an awareness of a shared cultural identity.<sup>16</sup> According to Harold Skramstad, President Emeritus of Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village, museums still used the term ‘universal’, but the focus had changed from collecting to education. In article “An Agenda for American Museums in the Twenty-First Century,” Skramstad explains that the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a time when museums wanted to allow universal access and education to everyone who entered. This made the institution an active part in providing an enriching experience for the public and would civilize them.<sup>17</sup> The British historian William St. Clair<sup>18</sup> points out in an article, “Imperial Appropriations of the Parthenon,” that this kind of educational goal was so important that

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<sup>13</sup>Paolucci, Antonio. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Paolucci, Antonio. 9-10.

<sup>15</sup> Lewis, Geoffrey. “The ‘Universal Museum’: A Case of Special Pleading?” *Art and Cultural Heritage: Law, Policy and Practice*, ed. Barbara T. Hoffman. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 379.

<sup>16</sup> Lewis, Geoffrey. “A Debated Museum Concept: Partnership in Universality.” *Museum International*, vol. 56, no. 4 (2004): 41.

<sup>17</sup> Skramstad, Harold. “An Agenda for American Museums in the Twenty-First Century.” *Daedalus*, vol. 128, no. 3 (Summer 1999): 110-111.

<sup>18</sup> Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London

museums did not press for the collection of original pieces. Instead, museums were filled with copies, engravings, plaster casts, and photography of art objects (in the latter part of the century) just to provide the widest possible access for the public.<sup>19</sup> Institutions did not mind making copies because, as Elaine Gurian former Vice President of the American Association of Museums explains in “What is the Object of this Exercise? A Meandering Exploration of the Many Meanings of Objects in Museums,” the “real” became the experience of seeing the completed work. For this reason all of these copies were still respected because of their ability to educate a ‘universal’ public in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>20</sup>

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Harold Skramstad explains that museums once again changed focus from education to collecting. Institutions became driven to accumulate and then manage vast collections, but there was not any notion that it was for a universal ideal.<sup>21</sup> In fact Antonio Paolucci says the only group to try to resurrect the idea of the ‘universal museum’ was the Nazis. In an attempt to create a utopian society for the Aryan race, Hitler sought to collect all the major works of art across Europe and house them in one great institution. This enduring legacy Paolucci explains left the universal museum to be considered nothing more than a synonym for “intolerable theft” and caused it to fall from use.<sup>22</sup>

The universal museum is a term that has continued to develop as the outlook and practices change in museums. Starting with diverse and sometimes random collections in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, universal museums wanted to collect examples of the entire natural and human world and systematically catalogue them by the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century,

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<sup>19</sup> St. Clair, William. “Imperial Appropriations of the Parthenon.” *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution*, ed. by John Henry Merryman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 94.

<sup>20</sup> Gurian, Elaine Heumann. “What is the Object of this Exercise? A Meandering Exploration of the Many Meanings of Objects in Museums.” *Daedalus*, vol. 128, no. 3 (1999): 169-170.

<sup>21</sup> Skramstad, Harold. 116.

<sup>22</sup> Paolucci, Antonio. 10.

collecting switched to universal education until switching back to collections in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### ***B. The Debate on Cultural Property***

The next section of the literature review focuses on synthesizing how the current debate on cultural property created the current incarnation of the universal museum. The debate created two sides that influence current use of the term universal museum. These two group views will then be used in the subsequent sections to look at missions and collections.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the universal museums once again switched focus to collections of institutions and their outlooks on culture. As stated in the *Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums*:

We should, however, recognize that objects acquired in earlier times must be viewed in the light of different sensitivities and values, reflective of that earlier era. The objects and monumental works that were installed decades and even centuries ago in museums throughout Europe and North America were acquired under conditions that are not comparable with current ones.

Over time, objects so acquired-whether by purchase, gift, or partage-have become part of the museums that have cared for them, and by extension part of the heritage of the nations which house them. Today we are especially sensitive to the subjects of a work's original context, but we should not lose sight of the fact that museums too provide a valid and valuable context for objects that were long ago displaced from their original source.

The universal admiration for ancient civilizations would not be so deeply established today were it not for the influence exercised by the artifacts of these cultures, widely available to an international public in major museums.<sup>23</sup>

These topics pointed out in the *Declaration* are issues dealing with cultural property in museums.

John Henry Merryman, the Nelson Bowman Sweitzer and Marie B. Sweitzer Professor of Law

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<sup>23</sup> *Declaration on the Importance and Value of the Universal Museums*. December 8, 2002. [www.clevelandart.org/ASSETS/.../UniversalMuseums.pdf](http://www.clevelandart.org/ASSETS/.../UniversalMuseums.pdf).

Emeritus at Stanford Law School, first commented on the debate in 1985 with the article “Talking about the Elgin Marbles,”<sup>24</sup> but codified those views in 1986 with “Two Ways of Thinking About Cultural Property” where Merryman outlined the debate and separated it into two factions calling one group the Internationalists and the other the Nationalists.<sup>25</sup> Professor of Law at Stanford University Robert Hallman points out in an article titled, “Museum and Cultural Property: A Retreat from the Internationalist Approach,” that the views in this article (plus those in subsequent works) have been used to frame the debate for nearly a quarter of a century.<sup>26</sup>

Merryman explains in “Cultural Property Internationalism,” that the Internationalists believe in *cultural property internationalism*, which he defines as “shorthand for the proposition that everyone has an interest in the preservation and enjoyment of cultural property, wherever it is situated, from whatever cultural or geographic source it derives.”<sup>27</sup> That interest in preservation and enjoyment in cultural property, according to Merryman in “The Free International Movement of Cultural Property,” is what led to the establishment of laws protecting those objects. An example is the *Lieber Code* from the American Civil War, which were rules drafted by the Union to govern the conduct of soldiers. Included in those codes were lessons for protecting museums, works of art, scientific collections, and libraries.<sup>28</sup> In his article “Cultural Property Internationalism,” Merryman explains that the principles of the *Lieber Code* were adopted in other treaties and military codes of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century until being incorporated into the *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* in

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<sup>24</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Talking about the Elgin Marbles.” *Thinking About the Elgin Marbles: Critical Essays on Cultural Property, Art and the Law*. (London: Kluwer Law International Ltd., 2000): 24.

<sup>25</sup> Hallman, Robert. “Museum and Cultural Property: A Retreat from the Internationalist Approach.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 1, <http://journals.cambridge.org/offcampus.lib.washington.edu/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=332440>.

<sup>26</sup> Hallman, Robert. 1.

<sup>27</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 11.

<sup>28</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “The Free International Movement of Cultural Property.” *New York University Journal on International Law and Politics*, vol. 31, 1 (1998-1999): 1-3.

1954.<sup>29</sup> According to Merryman, the Preamble of the *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* contains the endorsement for cultural property internationalism by stating, “damage to cultural property belonging to any people whatsoever means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind, since each people makes its contribution to the culture of the world.”<sup>30</sup> This belief that objects have an effect for all global culture, explains Merryman, is one of reasons for the creation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) whose preamble, Merryman states, contains the concept of cultural internationalism:

The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to the peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science, and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law, and for human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language, or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>31</sup>

Although the concept of cultural internationalism was recognized, Merryman stated in “Cultural Property Internationalism” that he believes that the Internationalist view was weakened by the methods endorsed by UNESCO to carry out that protection. According to Merryman, with the publishing of the *UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property* in 1970 and in 1976 the *UNESCO Recommendations Concerning the International Exchange of Cultural Property*, global organizations invested the power to govern cultural property with individual nations

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<sup>29</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 18-19

<sup>30</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 18-19.

<sup>31</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 21.

instead of creating an “international” methodology that all nations would follow.<sup>32</sup> According to Merryman, the Internationalists believe that conflict arises when individual nations can dictate to the international community instead of following an “international” view governing everyone.<sup>33</sup>

James Cuno endorses Merryman’s view in an article titled “Museums and the Acquisition of Antiquities” when describing the issues dealing with cultural property. Cuno explains that to protect cultural heritage, international organizations left terms such as *cultural property* and *cultural patrimony* with broad definitions to allow each nation to define what they mean by it.<sup>34</sup> Cuno believes that logically, patrimony is more important than mere property and that it is a subset of cultural property. He states cultural patrimony “is not something owned by a people, but something *of* them, a part of their defined collective identity.”<sup>35</sup> By leaving the definitions in individual hands, Cuno states that groups can simply call anything their cultural property. This is problematic for the Internationalists since it leads people to view property as inherently theirs instead of seeing it for what it is: a political construct based on a national, religious, or ethnic group according to Merryman and Cuno in “View of the Universal Museum.”<sup>36</sup> The dangers of claiming things as their own, according to Cuno in *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*, is that it can lead to nationalism, dangerous levels of which form into

...ideologies with roots in fear and hatred of the Other, often with racist affinities. They then become dangerous as reprehensible means of oppressing others, sources of vicious, even barbaric

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<sup>32</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 22-23.

<sup>33</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 22.

<sup>34</sup> Cuno, James. “Museums and the Acquisition of Antiquities.” *Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal*, 83 (2001): 84-85.

<sup>35</sup> Cuno, James. “Museums and the Acquisition of Antiquities.” *Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal*, 83 (2001): 84-85.

<sup>36</sup> Cuno, James. “View of the Universal Museum.” *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution*, ed. John Henry Merryman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 17.

sectarian violence, persuading colossal numbers of people to lay down their own lives in an effort to kill others. The ideal of the ultimate sacrifice is inspired by nationalism (or its cultural or religious equivalent) and it must be held accountable for untold acts of brutality.<sup>37</sup>

According to Merryman in “Two Ways of Thinking About Cultural Property,” the Internationalists believe that by looking at objects, all people can appreciate them and instead of separating them, it brings people together and creates a cosmopolitan atmosphere in the world. To achieve this, Merryman believe that one nation should not have an absolute claim to objects and they should be freely traded across the world so all people can appreciate them.<sup>38</sup> This sentiment, which is motivating Internationalists is summarized by Cuno in *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*:

It is our [humanity’s] common heritage as represented by and in antiquities and ancient texts and architecture. We should be working together to preserve and share it broadly as what is surely our common ancient heritage. That discrete antiquities have been found within the borders of a particular modern nation-state is a matter of chance. There is no natural and indelible connection between ancient and modern nation-states. The battle over our ancient heritage today is over false claims of ownership.<sup>39</sup>

As defined by Merryman in “Two Ways of Thinking About Cultural Property,” Nationalists are a group that is mainly made up of art-rich nations or nations that were home to many ancient civilizations and contain a wealth of archeological specimens like Greece, China, Iraq, Peru, or Nigeria. Supporting these nations according to Merryman is the archeological community.<sup>40</sup> Merryman explains in “Cultural Property Internationalism” the reason for the

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<sup>37</sup> Cuno, James. *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008): 132.

<sup>38</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Two Ways of Thinking About Cultural Property.” *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 80, no. 4 (Oct., 1986): 841.

<sup>39</sup> Cuno, James. *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008): 20.

<sup>40</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “The Free International Movement of Cultural Property.” *New York University Journal on International Law and Politics*, vol. 31, 1 (1998-1999): 12-13.

connection between these two groups is that although the profession of archeology is international, individual archeologists are not since they form deep attachments to the nations they work in. Archeologists often rely on governmental approval from the nations they are working in so the pressure for the two groups to work together is increased.<sup>41</sup> Although archeologists like Karen Vitelli, chair of the Graduate Program of Classical Archeology at Indiana University, explains in “An Archeologist’s Response to the Draft Principles to Govern a Licit International Traffic in Cultural Property” that although archeologists work in other countries, they are not necessarily “nationalists.” They view themselves as educators as well as archeologists, explaining the dangers of looting and destruction of sites to the people of their host countries as well as their own.<sup>42</sup> But education can aid in the creation of nationalism according to Director of Conservation Magdalena Morales Roja at the Coordinacion Nacional de Restauracion del Patrimonio. She explains in a quote in “Conference Reports” that it is an outcome of education of the past. Many groups become proud of their heritage and then want to protect it and they feel that they own it.<sup>43</sup> Calls for the acquisition of cultural objects from other countries, explains Nora Niedzielski-Eichner of the Department of Art and Art History at Stanford University in “Art Historians and Cultural Property Internationalism,” is what leads many Nationalists to see claims of ‘internationalism’ as a smokescreen to allow Western nations to gain access to the art that belongs to non-Western countries.<sup>44</sup> This need to own non-western art by Westerners creates a sense of imperialism by having those acquiring the objects to pass

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<sup>41</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 29.

<sup>42</sup> Vitelli, Karen D. “An Archeologist’s Response to the Draft Principles to Govern a Licit International Traffic in Cultural Property.” *Thinking About the Elgin Marbles: Critical Essays on Cultural Property, Art and the Law*. (London: Kluwer Law International Ltd., 2000): 237-238.

<sup>43</sup> Gerstenblith, Patty. “Conference Reports: *Art, Antiquity, and the Law: Preserving Our Global Cultural Heritage* (October 30-November 1, 1998).” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 8, no. 1 (1999): 328.

<sup>44</sup> Niedzielski-Eichner, Nora. “Art Historians and Cultural Property Internationalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 12 (2005): 195.

judgment on the cultural property in question, according to Mark O'Neill, the Director of the Glasgow Museums in "Enlightenment Museums: Universal or Merely Global?" It is not up to the nations where cultural property is found to say it has value, but the Internationalists who say it is worthy of the world's appreciation. Further complicating this connection O'Neill explains is that many of these nations compare it to the period when they were colonies of a Western nation.<sup>45</sup>

The debate over cultural property has led to the creation of two competing philosophies: the Internationalist and the Nationalist. Internationalists believe that a global outlook on cultural property is needed to foster and influence all people. To do so, cultural property needs to be distributed across the world. The Nationalists believe that the people or regions that produce objects are best qualified to interpret cultural property. The conflicting views have led to contention between both sides and in how they approach the universal museum.

### ***C. Missions***

The third section of the literature review explores and condenses what the mission of the universal museum is. Ideas on the missions are divided between the opposing views of the Internationalists and Nationalists.

The mission of the universal museum in 21<sup>st</sup> century explains James Cuno, comes from a combination of sources from both the debate on cultural heritage and the older 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century definitions of being universal. He states in "View of the Universal Museum":

...universal museums are dedicated to the proposition that the dissemination of knowledge and learning and the improvement of taste encourages refined and discriminating judgments between what is true and what is false, and the prerequisite for this is access to objects representative of the world's diverse cultures: what I call comparative contextual context, on that, in addition to focusing on the particular allure of a given object, opens a door onto the fact of cultural hybridity by which one culture engages with and influences another. In this respect, universal museums are a force

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<sup>45</sup> O'Neill, Mark. 194-195.

for understanding and tolerance in the world, and the dissipation of ignorance, superstition, and prejudice.<sup>46</sup>

Cuno's idea that the universal museum has a global outlook is reinforced by the words in the *Declaration on the Importance and Value of the Universal Museum* when it acknowledged that those institutions "serve not just citizens of one nation but the people of every nation."<sup>47</sup> By collecting from all over the world, states have allowed the universal museum to be representative of world heritage and to promote the concept of world heritage itself according to General Director of the State Museums of Berlin Peter-Klaus Schuster in "The Treasures of World Culture in the Public Museum." Schuster explains "often these objects only gain their notoriety because they have been displayed in these universal museums to a wide audience for hundreds of years."<sup>48</sup> Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum elaborates on Schuster's explanation in an article "A Museum to Illuminate our Global Village" by saying it was the housing of objects in museums that created the need to see things globally: "The notion of seeing ancient Greece as a separate world is no longer intellectually sustainable. Individual cultures do have their own histories, but ultimately they only make sense in the context of other cultures."<sup>49</sup>

James Cuno explains in *Who Owns Antiquity?* this global heritage serves as a counter to nationalism. Universal museums represent to him a global heritage that stands as an alternative to local nationalist cultural politics whose intent is to have cultural items returned and refuses to allow other items from leaving the borders of a particular nation.<sup>50</sup> During the original conference of universal museum directors in December of 2002, Philippe de Montebello, director

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<sup>46</sup> Cuno, James. "View of the Universal Museum." *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution*, ed. by John Henry Merryman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 32.

<sup>47</sup> *Declaration on the Importance and Value of the Universal Museums*.

<sup>48</sup> Schuster, Peter-Klaus. "The Treasures of World Culture in the Public Museum." *ICOM NEWS*, no. 1 (2004): 4.

<sup>49</sup> Bailey, Martin. "A Museum to illuminate our global village." *The Art Newspaper*, no. 136, May 2003.

<sup>50</sup> Cuno, James. *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008): xxxii.

of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, voiced support for fighting against those who would use objects for sectarian or national purposes. He said of these Nationalists, “if people stopped looking retrospectively at centuries ago, and move forward, then everyone would be ‘on the same page’.”<sup>51</sup> Merryman has stated in *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution* that by holding onto these collections, universal museums “maximize its [great works of antiquity] accessibility to scholars and to an international public while it frustrates nationalist and ownership claims of the nation of origin and limits the object’s accessibility to that nation’s people.”<sup>52</sup>

Nationalist do not entirely disagree with the mission of universal museums but according to Mark O’Neil in “Enlightenment Museums: Universal or Merely Global?”, these institutions must endeavor to describe the meaning of their collections from the perspective of the group that has made them. Sometimes that will be based on a Western interpretation but in other cases it will mean sacrificing the interpretive power of the institution and handing it over to that group.<sup>53</sup> Although universal museums will seek to describe the positives of global culture, explains Alan Audi, an attorney in Paris who works on cultural property, they must also be advocates for making people aware of the inequalities that do exist in the world and the checkered past of many of the objects in the collection.<sup>54</sup> George Abungu, former Director General of the National Museums of Kenya, argues in the article “The Declaration: A Contested Issue” that there needs to be more than just statement of universality to these institutions. He states:

I strongly contest the idea that some museums may call themselves Universal Museums. Surely all museums share a common mission and a shared vision. Do Universal Museums claim to be universal on the grounds of their size, their collections, how rich they are?

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<sup>51</sup> Bailey, Martin. “We serve all cultures, say the big, global museums.” *The Art Newspaper*, January 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Introduction.” *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution*, ed. by John Henry Merryman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 13.

<sup>53</sup> O’Neill, Mark. 191.

<sup>54</sup> Audi, Alan. “A semiotics of Cultural Property Argument.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 14, 2 (2007) 146.

Moreover, each museum should have something special that makes it of universal value for humanity...So what is the basis of their universal value? Are Universal Museums based solely in Europe and North America?

It seems to me that the *Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums* is signed principally by a group of large museums who want to create a different pedigree of museum, largely due to fears that materials held in their collections of which the ownership is contested, will face claims for repatriation. It is a way of refusing to engage in dialogue around the issue of repatriation. If the signatories of the *Declaration* are trying to create the idea that their collections are held in trust for all of humanity, then why do they still call themselves by their original names? Why not “Universal Museum in Britain” rather than “British Museum”?<sup>55</sup>

According to the Internationalists, they believe the mission of the current universal museum is to spread a global outlook on culture in order to counter nationalistic views that to them divide people. Nationalists do not oppose this idea but want steps taken to not use just a Western interpretation and to address previous cases of colonialism.

#### ***D. Collections***

The final section of the literature review explores the collection practices that have been described by advocates and critics of universal museums. It synthesizes the writings on the type of objects being collected, the topic of value, and the kind of practices needed to distribute them.

The promotion of global culture requires the ability of universal museums to add to their diverse collections of cultural property, according to James Cuno in “Museums and the Acquisition of Antiquities,” which would require the creation of a cultural property art market. Cuno explains that the reason one does not exist is that nations have established retentionist policies of cultural property to restrict the removal of objects from their places of origin. This was meant as an extreme measure to stop the spread of looting of archeological sites and not a

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<sup>55</sup> Abungu, George. “The Declaration: A Contested Issue.” *ICOM NEWS*, no. 1 (2004): 5.

general policy.<sup>56</sup> According to Merryman in “Archaeologists Are Not Helping”, by using it as a general practice it creates the opposite effect by making many objects to be termed illicit, which creates a shift in supply and demand on objects of cultural heritage. Right now the demand is high but retentionist policies keep the supply low thus promoting looting. The solution to this problem requires the “apparent reasonableness” of increasing the supply to meet demand according to Merryman.<sup>57</sup> James Cuno supports these views of Merryman in “The Whole Worlds Treasures” and says:

Such measures-export restrictions and claiming cultural property as state property-are meant to prevent the loss of national cultural property and the looting of archeological sites. US art museums decry such looting and the loss of knowledge that results from it. But still, and within the terms of the 1970 UNESCO Convention and the laws of our country, our museums pursue an internationalist policy that encourages the free trade in cultural property.<sup>58</sup>

Cuno concludes in “The Whole World’s Treasures,” that the goals of universal institutions should be “respect for national cultural property and the protection of archeological sites, for sure. But above all else, the preservation of the world’s cultural legacy, object by object if necessary, through licit and free international trade.”<sup>59</sup> Merryman explains in “Two Ways of Thinking About Cultural Property,” that increased collecting of cultural property would also stop the process of hoarding of objects in national collections. By allowing nations to claim all cultural materials, he explains, they are burdened with large amounts of redundant materials that

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<sup>56</sup> Cuno, James. “Museums and the Acquisition of Antiquities.” *Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal*, vol. 19, 2 (2001): 86.

<sup>57</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Archaeologists are not helping.” *The Art Newspaper*, January 1996.

<sup>58</sup> Cuno, James. “The Whole World’s Treasures.” *Boston Globe*, March 11, 2001.

<sup>59</sup> Cuno, James. “The Whole World’s Treasures.” *Boston Globe*, March 11, 2001.

simply end up in storehouses and languish there in “covetous neglect.”<sup>60</sup> Cuno explains in *Who Owns Antiquity?* one nation that Internationalists use as a case example is Italy where:

...museums are engorged with antiquities and their storerooms have been filled to capacity with antiquities waiting to be catalogued, studied, and published. The promise is always that they will be published and thereby shared with the world. But Italy’s record when it comes to publishing archeological finds is poor (it is not alone in this respect). Finds languish in museum storerooms never to be published. And when those few are published, it is hardly done in a manner accessible to the general public. They almost always appear in reports prepared by specialists for specialists. Archeological reports can never take the place of gallery presentations of antiquities. Only the object-the actual antiquity, the thing itself-has the allure to attract the public’s curiosity...If they remain off view in storerooms for years or forever, they are mute and invisible...<sup>61</sup>

Cuno points out in “Beyond Bamiyan: Will the World be Ready Next Time?” that this is what happens to redundant materials in museums and that they would be better placed by ending with people who readily want them. He makes a point that this market is for “minor antiquities” like potshards or vase fragments but not necessarily for larger objects like architectural fragments.<sup>62</sup>

In “Two Ways of Thinking about Cultural Property” Merryman explains that the sale of cultural property would better protect objects since those who are prepared to pay the most for it would not want anything to happen to their investment. By opposing this type of market, Merryman explains, cultural property remains in danger since it is currently in a system, “dominated by nations dedicated to the retention and repatriation of cultural property. First

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<sup>60</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Two Ways of Thinking About Cultural Property.” *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 80, no. 4 (Oct., 1986): 846-847.

<sup>61</sup> Cuno, James. *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008): 128.

<sup>62</sup> Cuno, James. “Beyond Bamiyan: Will the World be Ready Next Time?” *Art and Cultural Heritage: Law, Policy and Practice*. edited by Barbara T. Hoffman. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 45.

World-Third World and capitalist-socialist politics combine with romantic Byronism to stifle the energetic presentation of the views of market nations.”<sup>63</sup>

Lisa Borodkin, a lawyer and expert on illicit antiquities market, explains in “The Economics of Antiquities Looting and A proposed Legal Alternative” the problem Nationalists have with these ideas of collecting and having a market to support it is that the only basis to build on is the art market, which she points out is often distrusted due to the amount of secrecy that is inherent in it.<sup>64</sup> Clemency Coggins, Professor of Archaeology and Art History at Boston University points out in “A Proposal for Museum Acquisition Policies in the Future” there is trouble putting cultural property in the current art market because it is designed for art objects that are made to be commodities, but cultural objects are not necessarily made for laissez faire trade. These objects, Coggins explains, are antiquities that have ethnic connotations that cannot simply fit into a market made for selling paintings and furniture.<sup>65</sup> She points out that the first hurdle would be to get politicians in the cultural producing countries to agree to marketing objects of cultural property since it would be political suicide for them to say that their country should put its heritage up for sale.<sup>66</sup> Edward Dwyer, Dean of Liberal Arts at the Rhode Island School of Design, points out in “Critical Comments on the Draft Principles to Govern a Licit International Traffic in Cultural Property” that there is no evidence that forming a market would solve the problem of looting. He explains that Peru had a legal internal market for pre-Columbian artifacts until the 1960’s; the government allowed for a percentage of those objects to leave the country and allowed foreigners to excavate sites and retain some of the objects. This

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<sup>63</sup> Merryman, John Henry. “Two Ways of Thinking About Cultural Property.” *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 80, no. 4 (Oct., 1986): 849-50

<sup>64</sup> Borodkin, Lisa J. “The Economics of Antiquities Looting and A proposed Legal Alternative.” *Columbia Law Review*, vol. 95, no. 2 (Mar. 1995): 385.

<sup>65</sup> Coggins, Clemency Chase. “A Proposal for Museum Acquisition Policies in the Future.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 7, no. 2 (1998): 435.

<sup>66</sup> Coggins, Clemency Chase. “Cultural Property and Ownership: Antiquities.” *Connecticut Journal of International Law*, vol. 16. (2000-2001): 185.

lead to an increase in collections but according to Dwyer looting and an illicit market continued in parallel with the legal ones.<sup>67</sup> He also points out that archeological practices such as conservation and preservation are expensive processes that the sale of vase fragments and other “minor antiquities” would fail to cover.<sup>68</sup>

There is also contention over the issue of museums in cultural producing countries amassing enormous and forgotten collections according to Elazar Barkan, Professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, in *Claiming the Stones Naming the Bones*. Descriptions like the one Cuno described in Italy in *Who Owns Antiquity?* say only museums in nations with cultural retention laws for antiquities suffer from “hoarding.” But Barkan explains that even universal museums amass huge collections that often do not go on display or get published and just remain in their basements.<sup>69</sup> Maxwell L. Anderson, the current Director and CEO of the Indianapolis Museum of Art explains in “Art Market Challenges for American Museums” that it is also doubtful a market for redundant objects would work since many institutions would probably not want them. He states:

The problematic aspect of this provision is that a handful of archeological collections in the United States might be interested in acquiring so-called ‘excess’ objects-or duplicates-but these are the museums which are philosophically opposed to the very existence of an art market, since it serves to commodity objects which from an archeological perspective have value in direct proportion to the survival of their context. On the other hand, American art museums are unlikely to be enthusiastic about acquiring objects deemed to be ‘excess’ by art-rich countries, since they would almost certainly be of a caliber, or to use a word unfashionable on our shores, ‘quality,’ of minimal interest to

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<sup>67</sup> Dwyer, Edward. “Critical Comments on the Draft Principles to Govern a Licit International Traffic in Cultural Property.” *Thinking About the Elgin Marbles: Critical Essays on Cultural Property, Art and the Law*. (London: Kluwer Law International Ltd., 2000): 232.

<sup>68</sup> Dwyer, Edward. 234.

<sup>69</sup> Barkan, Elazar. “Amending Historical Injustices: The Restitution of Cultural Property-An Overview.” *Claiming the Stones Naming the Bones*. ed. Elazar Barkan and Ronald Bush. (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 1998): 31.

museums devoted to the presentation of the foremost artistic legacies of civilizations, not their detritus.<sup>70</sup>

Clemency Coggins also challenges the Internationalist idea of assigning monetary value to cultural property in “Cultural Property and Ownership: Antiquities.” To her, Internationalists aside from museums would also want cultural objects for reasons including their beauty, value as an investment, or the status and prestige connected to ownership but few do it for historic context. Original function and purpose to Coggins will in all likelihood not be factors in what an individual or institution is willing to pay.<sup>71</sup> Fred Kleiner, Chair of the Department of History of Art & Architecture at Boston University worries in “On the Publication of Recent Acquisitions of Antiquities” that archeological research on objects will be appropriated to enhance the market values of objects. Kleiner explains that the Archeological Institute of America makes a clear stand by saying that it “will not assist those acquiring antiquities without pedigree or export permits to enhance the market value or perceived importance of their acquisitions by presenting them for the first time under the aegis of (and with the implied stamp of approval of) the Archeological Institute of America.”<sup>72</sup>

The summary of these sources depict that to exchange cultural property, the Internationalists believe in creating a cultural property market that will serve to protect objects from looting since there will be a market to support demand. The market will help to solve the problem of crowded collections in source countries and add extra protection to objects by assigning them increased monetary value. Nationalists oppose the creation of a market since they believe it would have to be modeled on the art market. They also disagree on the protection

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<sup>70</sup> Anderson, Maxwell L. “Art Market Challenges for American Museums.” *Thinking About the Elgin Marbles: Critical Essays on Cultural Property, Art and the Law*. (London: Kluwer Law International Ltd., 2000): 253.

<sup>71</sup> Coggins, Clemency Chase. “Cultural Property and Ownership: Antiquities.” *Connecticut Journal of International Law*, vol. 16. (2000-2001): 186.

<sup>72</sup> Kleiner, Fred S. “On the Publication of Recent Acquisitions of Antiquities.” *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 94, no. 4 (Oct. 1990): 526.

added monetary value would have for objects and oppose the use of research to set monetary value.

### ***III. Methodology***

The purpose of this research is to identify and describe the characteristics of a new category of museum called the universal museum. The methodologies employed in this study were two document analyses. Mission and value statements and IRS Form 990 forms submitted for 2012 were selected from two groups of museums. *The Handbook for Museums* defines mission as “a document that establishes the limitation on the collection and defines the role of the museum.”<sup>73</sup> As a general practice of American Museums, mission and value statements define their identity and reveal what programs are created to carry out the mission. IRS Forms 990 forms are submitted yearly by museums to maintain their 501(c)(3) tax exemption status with the Internal Revenue Service as well as to provide public transparency to the public on the actions of the organization. This status validates their value as an educational institution and indicates not only what the institution does but also shows all financial information within an operating year.<sup>74</sup>

Two groups of museums were selected for examination in this study. One group of nine represents universal museums and was taken from the list of the signers of the *Declaration on the Importance and Value of the Universal Museums*. Of these museums, only institutions located in the United States were included so all of the selected institutions follow the same national standards and submit the same type of information to the government. Of the ten signers that were in the United States, only nine were selected since the J. Paul Getty Museum does not submit the same information as the others. The nine institutions selected for this study were the Art Institute of Chicago, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,

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<sup>73</sup> Edson, Gary and Davis Dean. *The Handbook for Museums*. (New York: Routledge, 1996): 28.

<sup>74</sup> Genoways, Hugh H.; Lynne M. Ireland. *Museum Administration: an Introduction*. (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2003): 31-35.

the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (MoMA), Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

A comparison group of nine other institutions was selected from the United States that had not signed the *Declaration*. Their selections were based on their geographic proximity to the nine universal museums or were located in cities that were considered likely tourist destinations in the United States. The museums selected for the second group were Field Museum of Natural History, the Seattle Art Museum, the Peabody Essex Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the New Orleans Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Fine Art Museums of San Francisco, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

## ***IV. Findings and Analysis***

### ***A. Introduction***

For the purposes of this research, two document analyses were used to examine the characteristics that make up the new category of museum called the universal museum. Mission and value statements and IRS Form 990 forms were selected from two groups of nine museums, one described as universal museums and the other made up of similar art of natural history museums containing similar collections and located in heavily tourist American cities. Specifically, the characteristics of the missions, collections, and size of the institutions will be investigated. Mission statements will be examined for indications of the audience, multicultural outlook, and the quality of the collections. IRS Form 990 tax documents will be examined for acquisition budgets, status of collections as an asset, size of the staff, number of voting board members, number of volunteers, total compensation, compensation of just the director, total revenue, total expenditures, and total assets.

### ***B. Section A: Mission Statement Analysis***

Mission statements will be examined for indications of the audience, multicultural outlook, and the quality of the collections. In all cases, key words or phrases were searched for in the mission and value statements to see if the institution upheld them.

#### ***a. Audience***

For audience, the key words and phrases were sought to see if the audience it represented was global, ambiguous, or made no mention of audience at all. Some of the words included those like “global,” “international,” or referred to geography beyond the confines of the city, state, or nation that the museum is situated in. Ambiguous words like “broad,” “wide,” or “large”

do not necessarily pertain to a global audience but could also refer to income, educational level, or ethnicity.

*i. Findings*

Table 1. Findings Table for Mission Audience

<b>Universal Museums</b>	<b>No Mentioned</b>	<b>Ambiguous</b>	<b>Global Audience</b>
The Art Institute of Chicago	X		
Cleveland Art Museum			X
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum			X
Los Angeles County Museum of Art		X	
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	X		
The Museum of Fine Art, Boston		X	
The Museum of Modern Art, New York			X
Philadelphia Museum of Art		X	
Whitney Museum of American Art		X	
<b>Comparison Group</b>			
Field Museum of Natural History			X
Seattle Art Museum	X		
Peabody Essex Museum		X	
Brooklyn Museum		X	
New Orleans Museum of Art		X	
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston			X
Fine Art Museums of San Francisco		X	
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles	X		
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago		X	

*ii. Analysis*

Table 1 indicates that when referring to audience in mission statements, three of the nine (33%) universal museums have mission or vision statements claiming a global audience. The Cleveland Art Museum says it was established “for all people forever”; the Guggenheim says it engages both “local and global audiences”; and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) says it serves “the diverse local, national and international audiences.” Four of the nine museums (44%) also say they have a large audience but not necessarily that it is global. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art says it serves the “widest array of audiences”; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

says they “serve a wide variety of people”; the Philadelphia Museum of Art says it has a “diverse audience”; and the Whitney Museum of American Art says it serves a “diverse public”. Four of the nine museums (44%) also say they have a large audience but not necessarily that it is global.. The remaining two museums (22% of the nine), the Art Institute of Chicago and The Metropolitan Museum of Art only say they serve the “the public”.

In comparison, the test group of non-signers had two of the nine (22%) say they serve a global audience. The Field Museum of Natural History says it has “local and world-wide communities” and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston says it serves “all people”. Five of the nine institutions (56%) also used ambiguous language. The Peabody Essex Museum says it creates experiences for a “diverse audience”; the Brooklyn Museum serves a “diverse public”; the New Orleans Museum of Art “engages a diverse public”; the Fine Art Museums of San Francisco says it draws a “broad audience”; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago says it engages a “broad and diverse audience”. The last two institutions (22%) only make reference to “people” (the Seattle Art Museum) and “artists and audiences” (the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles).

### ***b. Multicultural Outlook***

Missions were also examined to see if the mention of multicultural outlook was also used. This was determined if the collection was interpreted by such terms as “international, ” “multiple cultures,” “diversity,” or statements mentioning the crossing of political boundaries. No mention of interpretation was also considered along with the description of the collection’s scope described as merely diverse or made up of many cultures.

### ***i. Findings***

Table 2. Findings Table for Mission Collections Outlook

<b>Universal Museums</b>	<b>Multicultural Outlook</b>	<b>Diverse Collection</b>	<b>No Mention</b>
The Art Institute of Chicago	X		
Cleveland Art Museum		X	
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum	X		
Los Angeles County Museum of Art		X	
The Metropolitan Museum of Art		X	
The Museum of Fine Art, Boston	X		
The Museum of Modern Art, New York	X		
Philadelphia Museum of Art			X
Whitney Museum of American Art	X		
<b>Comparison Group</b>			
Field Museum of Natural History	X		
Seattle Art Museum		X	
Peabody Essex Museum	X		
Brooklyn Museum	X		
New Orleans Museum of Art	X		
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston			X
Fine Art Museums of San Francisco			X
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles			X
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	X		

*ii. Analysis*

Examination for stating multicultural outlook in missions in Table 2 reveals that five of nine or 56% of the universal museum group mention they look across cultures. The Art Institute of Chicago says it represents “the world’s diverse artistic traditions”; the Guggenheim says it “explores ideas across cultures”; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston says it acts to create “greater cultural awareness”; MoMA says its works “transcend national boundaries”; and the Whitney Museum of American Art interprets its collections in “the broadest global, historical and interdisciplinary context”. Three of the nine or 33% of the universal museums say they have diverse collections but do not mention interpretation through a multicultural outlook. The Cleveland Museum of Art says it’s “comprehensive”; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art says it has “art from a broad range of cultures and historical periods”; and the Metropolitan

Museum of Art says its collections “represent the broadest spectrum of human achievement”. These references are vague as to whether those collections are interpreted that way. The Philadelphia Museum of Art, representing 11% of the universal museums, makes no mention to the way it interprets its collection. Of the comparison group, 56% or five of the nine say they have a multicultural outlook. The Field Museum of Natural History says it is “concerned with the diversity and relationships in nature and among cultures”; and the Peabody Essex Museum says it “strives to create experiences that transform peoples’ lives by broadening their perspectives, attitudes, and knowledge of themselves and the wider world.” Brooklyn Museum says it wants “to act as a bridge between the rich artistic heritage of world cultures”; the New Orleans Museum of Art says it recognizes the importance of “collaboration with other cultures” and celebrates “creativity in all cultures from all periods”; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago wants to “understand the historical, social, and cultural context of the art of our time”. Only the Seattle Art Museum (11%) makes reference to diverse collection but no interpretation saying it “exhibits objects from across time and across cultures”. The remaining three institutions (33%) make no reference to either what they collect or how it is interpreted.

*c. Quality of Collections*

Finally, missions were examined to see if they stated what quality level the objects in the collection are. These would be terms that point to a standing like “preeminent” or to terms that indicate a scale being used like “highest order.”

*i. Findings*

Table 3. Findings Table for Missions Collections Quality

<b>Universal Museums</b>	<b>No Mention</b>	<b>Finest Quality</b>
The Art Institute of Chicago		X
Cleveland Art Museum		X
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum	X	
Los Angeles County Museum of Art		X

The Metropolitan Museum of Art		X
The Museum of Fine Art, Boston		X
The Museum of Modern Art, New York		X
Philadelphia Museum of Art	X	
Whitney Museum of American Art	X	
<b>Comparison Group</b>		
Field Museum of Natural History	X	
Seattle Art Museum	X	
Peabody Essex Museum		X
Brooklyn Museum		X
New Orleans Museum of Art	X	
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston		X
Fine Art Museums of San Francisco	X	
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles	X	
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	X	

*ii. Analysis*

When describing their collections, 67% of the universal museums make reference to them being of high quality. The Art Institute of Chicago says its collections are of the “highest quality”; the Cleveland Museum of Art says it collects the “highest aesthetic”; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art says its works are “significant”; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art says its collections are of the “highest level of quality”; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston describes its collections as “preeminent”; and MoMA says its collections are of the “highest order”. The remaining 33% of universal museums make no reference to the quality of their collections. Of the test group, only 33% make references to the quality level of their collections in their mission statements. The Peabody Essex Museum calls the objects in their collections “the finest of their kind”; the Brooklyn Museum says it’s “committed to the excellence in every aspect of its collections”; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston says its “dedicated to excellence in collecting”.

*C. Section B: IRS Form 990 Analysis*

IRS Form 990 tax documents will be examined for acquisition budgets, status of whether or not the collection is an asset, number of voting board members, size of the staff, number of volunteers, total compensation, compensation of just the director, total revenue, total expenditures, and total assets. For each topic, the specific lines were used from the forms.

*a. Acquisition Budgets and Collections Status*

On IRS Form 990 tax documents, for both universal museums and the comparison group, Part IX, Line 24a-d will be examined to see if institutions actively set aside part of their budget for collecting and acquisitioning objects. Schedule D, Part III, Line 1a will be checked to see if the museum considers its collection as an asset.

*i. Findings*

Table 4. Findings Table for IRS Forms 990 Acquisition Budgets and Collections Status

<b>Universal Museum</b>	<b>Amount Spent on Accessions</b>	<b>Not an Asset</b>
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	\$38,853,776.00	X
The Museum of Modern Art, New York	\$31,874,716.00	X
Los Angeles County Museum of Art	\$24,161,480.00	X
The Museum of Fine Art, Boston	\$22,576,287.00	X
The Art Institute of Chicago	\$11,283,056.00	X
Cleveland Art Museum	\$10,646,340.00	X
Philadelphia Museum of Art	\$3,784,696.00	X
Whitney Museum of American Art	\$1,308,000.00	X
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum	\$714,339.00	X
<b>Comparison Group</b>		
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	\$20,609,711.00	X
Brooklyn Museum	\$2,069,794.00	X
Seattle Art Museum	\$1,927,759.00	X
New Orleans Museum of Art	\$1,201,235.00	X
Peabody Essex Museum	\$862,195.00	X
Field Museum of Natural History	\$-	X
Fine Art Museums of San Francisco	\$-	
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles	\$-	X
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	\$-	X

*ii. Analysis*

Table 4 shows that the universal museums spent a total of \$145,202,690.00 in 2012 on acquisitioning new objects to their collections. This ranged from the Guggenheim’s \$714,339.00 to the Metropolitan’s \$38,853,776.00. On average, the universal museums spent \$16,133,632.00 on new acquisitions. The comparison group spent \$26,670,694.00 on new acquisitions, ranging from \$0 for three of the institutions to \$20,609,711.00 by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. On average this amounted to \$2,963,410.00 per institution. The test group’s spending on acquisitions is only 14% of what universal museums spend. Whether or not the collection is treated as an asset, 100% of the universal museum group claimed that their collections were exempt as assets because they did not associate any dollar value or that they only associated a value of \$1 per item. Of the test group, 89% claimed that their collections were exempt as assets because they did not associate any dollar value or they only associated a value of \$1 per item. Only the Art Museums of San Francisco left this section blank

***b. Number of Voting Board, Staff, and Volunteers***

On IRS Form 990 tax documents, the number of voting board members was taken from Part I, Line 3, the number of employees from Part I, Line 5, and the number of volunteers was taken from Part I, Line 6.

***i. Findings***

Table 5. Findings Table for IRS Forms 990 Number of Voting Board, Staff, and Volunteers

<b>Universal Museums</b>	<b>Voting Board Members</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>
The Art Institute of Chicago	45	3237	819
Cleveland Art Museum	29	465	560
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum	25	585	289
Los Angeles County Museum of Art	52	428	555
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	44	2363	1259
The Museum of Fine Art, Boston	43	1478	1570
The Museum of Modern Art, New York	40	1100	371

Philadelphia Museum of Art	70	757	405
Whitney Museum of American Art	43	313	100
<b>Comparison Group</b>			
Field Museum of Natural History	82	742	534
Seattle Art Museum	69	338	639
Peabody Essex Museum	23	291	120
Brooklyn Museum	32	452	340
New Orleans Museum of Art	45	76	800
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	79	829	1026
Fine Art Museums of San Francisco	52	455	558
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles	41	218	115
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	67	281	336

*ii. Analysis*

According to Table 5, the number of voting members in universal museums ranges from 25 to 70 and on average number 43. Also, the range on the numbers of employees at the institution is from 313 to 3,237; which is an average of 1,191 employees. Volunteers range between 100 and 1,570 or 659 on average at a universal museum. For the comparison group, the number of voting board members ranges between 23 and 82 and averages 54 members. The total number of employees is between 76 and 829, with an average of 409. The number of volunteers ranges between 115 to 1,026 and an average of about 496. This means that on average, the comparison group has 20% more voting board members than the universal museums but only 34% of paid employees and 75% of the volunteers the universal museums have.

*c. Total Compensation of Employees and Director*

On IRS Form 990 tax documents, the total compensation for all employees will be calculated by adding the totals from Part IX: Lines 5 (compensation of current officers, director, trustees, and key employees), 7 (other salaries and wages), 8 (pension plan contributions), and 9 (other employee benefits). As the highest paid persons at the museums, the compensation of the Directors will be compared separately and comes from Schedule J, Part II, Column E.

*i. Findings*

Table 6. Findings Table for IRS Forms 990 Total Compensation of Employees and Director

<b>Universal Museums</b>	<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>Directors Compensation</b>
The Art Institute of Chicago	\$92,619,415.00	\$410,997.00
Cleveland Art Museum	\$18,488,990.00	\$416,475.00
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum	\$28,985,155.00	\$746,253.00
Los Angeles County Museum of Art	\$26,406,261.00	\$1,265,366.00
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	\$168,321,411.00	\$1,113,585.00
The Museum of Fine Art, Boston	\$45,262,770.00	\$766,426.00
The Museum of Modern Art, New York	\$75,015,298.00	\$1,822,257.00
Philadelphia Museum of Art	\$24,303,779.00	\$506,890.00
Whitney Museum of American Art	\$16,568,000.00	\$775,791.00
<b>Comparison Group</b>		
Field Museum of Natural History	\$28,119,405.00	\$335,619.00
Seattle Art Museum	\$13,338,005.00	\$458,675.00
Peabody Essex Museum	\$10,099,191.00	\$715,762.00
Brooklyn Museum	\$26,243,396.00	\$573,395.00
New Orleans Museum of Art	\$3,555,386.00	\$364,016.00
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	\$28,185,621.00	\$925,503.00
Fine Art Museums of San Francisco	\$16,006,531.00	\$1,385,330.00
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles	\$6,407,613.00	\$916,377.00
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	\$5,774,204.00	\$370,582.00

*ii. Analysis*

According to Table 6, the universal group spent a total of \$495,971,079.00 on total compensation to its employees. This ranged from \$16,568,000.00 to \$168,321,411.00 and averaged out to \$55,107,897.00 by universal museums. Director’s compensation totaled \$7,824,040.00 and ranged from \$410,997.00 to \$1,822,257.00, which averages out to \$869,337.78. In the comparison group, a total of \$137,729,352.00 was spent on total compensation, ranging from institutions spending \$3,555,386.00 to \$28,185,621.00 and averaging \$15,303,261.33 spent on compensation. The directors received a total of \$6,045,259.00; ranging between \$335,619.00 to \$1,385,330.00 and averaging to \$671,695.44.

This means the comparison group only spent 28% of what the universal museums spent on total compensation and 77% on director’s compensation.

***d. Total Revenue, Expenditures, and Assets***

On IRS Form 990 tax documents, total revenue, expenditures, and assets will be the final analysis group. The parts of the IRS Forms 990 used are Part I, Line 12 for revenue, Part I, Line 18 for expenditures, and Part I, Line 20 for total assets.

***i. Findings***

Table 7. Findings Table for IRS Forms 990 Total Revenue, Expenditures, and Assets

<b>Universal Museums</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Assets</b>
The Art Institute of Chicago	\$242,355,755.00	\$243,138,473.00	\$1,351,684,071.00
Cleveland Art Museum	\$89,100,516.00	\$52,068,141.00	\$1,018,524,073.00
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum	\$72,284,172.00	\$70,872,926.00	\$153,616,764.00
Los Angeles County Museum of Art	\$80,746,356.00	\$112,030,725.00	\$660,462,075.00
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	\$418,697,665.00	\$386,224,916.00	\$3,202,789,465.00
The Museum of Fine Art, Boston	\$152,013,278.00	\$149,185,619.00	\$1,135,859,886.00
The Museum of Modern Art, New York	\$237,817,359.00	\$220,006,473.00	\$1,458,459,054.00
Philadelphia Museum of Art	\$79,868,516.00	\$63,126,032.00	\$732,680,042.00
Whitney Museum of American Art	\$54,786,000.00	\$38,694,000.00	\$602,967,000.00
<b>Comparison Group</b>			
Field Museum of Natural History	\$74,354,966.00	\$75,183,974.00	\$594,427,236.00
Seattle Art Museum	\$24,515,342.00	\$35,426,154.00	\$266,637,368.00
Peabody Essex Museum	\$84,118,743.00	\$35,955,902.00	\$463,527,376.00
Brooklyn Museum	\$53,564,250.00	\$41,481,743.00	\$290,334,505.00
New Orleans Museum of Art	\$6,578,366.00	\$8,455,269.00	\$50,249,525.00
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	\$76,374,152.00	\$83,082,403.00	\$1,118,124,615.00
Fine Art Museums of San Francisco	\$35,471,922.00	\$35,700,292.00	\$20,785,321.00
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles	\$18,450,772.00	\$18,469,594.00	\$39,454,860.00
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	\$14,393,619.00	\$15,103,631.00	\$132,420,783.00

***ii. Analysis***

For revenue, according to Table 7, the universal museums had a total of \$1,427,669,617.00, which averages out to \$158,629,957.44 per museum. The ranges in revenue went from \$54,786,000.00 to \$418,697,665.00. The total expenditures were \$1,335,347,305.00,

which averages out to \$148,371,922.00. They range in expenditures from \$38,694,000.00 to \$386,224,916.00. The total assets of the universal museums were \$10,317,042,430.00, which averages \$1,146,338,047 and ranges from \$153,616,764.00 to \$3,202,789,465.00. The comparison group on Table 7 only totaled \$387,822,132.00 in revenues, with an average of \$43,091,348.00 per museum. Their revenues ranged from \$6,578,366.00 to \$43,091,348.00. The total expenditures were \$348,858,962.00, which averages out to \$38,762,106.89. These expenditures ranged from \$8,455,269.00 to \$83,082,403.00. The total amount in assets held by the test group was \$2,975,961,589.00, which averages \$330,662,398.78 and ranges from \$20,785,321.00 to \$1,118,124,615.00. This means the comparison groups' totals were only 27% of the universal museums' total revenues, 26% of the universal museums' total expenditures, and 29% of the universal museums' total assets.

## *V. Discussion and Results*

If phrases like “broad audience” are interpreted to mean people from all over the world, then 77% of both the universal museums and the test group include global audience in their mission statements and 56% of both groups mentioned that they examine their collections from a globalized perspective. Very few institutions examined considered their collections as part of their assets on their 990 forms (100% of the universal museum to 89% of the comparison group). The major differences about the collections of each sample group were that 67% of the universal museums refer in their missions to their quality level compared to only 33% of the test group and the test group only spent 14% of what the universal museums did to acquire new acquisitions. Larger differences were apparent on the rest of the 990 forms when it came to size of an institution. The comparison group has only 34% of the number of employees that the universal museums have and spent only 28% of the total compensation that the universal museums do. Also, the comparison group revenues, expenditures, and assets were only 27%, 26%, and 29% of what the universal museums had. The areas that were closest were the number of volunteers (75% of the universal museums) and the amount that was paid out to the directors in compensation (77% compared to universal museums) but there was still a +20% difference. The only place the test group was larger was in the number of voting board members which was 20% higher than the average number of universal museums.

The implications of these results are that both groups have nearly identical results in terms of defining their audience, having a multicultural outlook, and not treating collections as assets. The results suggest both groups are following standard practices that are upheld by the museum field as a whole. Because there are no significant differences in the characteristics that

were analyzed, the claims made by Internationalists that these are qualifiers for a new category of museum seem difficult to accept if most museums already use them. The claims of collecting only items of quality and spending so much on acquisitions seems to confirm the opinions of the Nationalists, like in Maxwell L. Anderson's "Art Market Challenges for American Museums,"<sup>75</sup> that universal museums only want to collect items of exceptional quality. By having large resources for collecting, it confirms the fears that a global cultural property market will favor a few institutions with the financial muscle to participate versus smaller institutions, much like the 44% of institutions in the test group that planned for \$0.00 to be spent on new acquisitions. Comparing the financial information confirms the sheer size difference that exists between the two groups in regards to revenue, expenditures, assets, and compensation. Because the universal museums are so much bigger, it also lends greater weight to the claims of Nationalists, like Geoffrey Lewis in "The Universal Museum: a Special Case?"<sup>76</sup> who say that the designation of being a universal museum is an attempt by larger institutions to get special privileges and not to follow accepted museum practices.

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<sup>75</sup> Anderson, Maxwell L. 253.

<sup>76</sup> Lewis, Geoffrey. "The Universal Museum: a Special Case?" *ICOM NEWS*, no. 1 (2004): 3.

## ***VI. Conclusion***

The goal of this research was to identify and describe the characteristics of a new category of museum called the universal museum. In the framework of this research, the overall implication of these results is that there are not enough differences in mission statements to separate these museums based on practices. The only differences are in the size and resources of those claiming to be universal museums compared to the comparison group: this gives them an elite status among institutions but does not designate them as a new type of museum. Based on the findings of this study, it appears there are not that many differences in missions and collections, merely in size of the institution based on its financial resources.

There are limitations to generalizing this research, mainly when considering many institutions that were not part of this research. Because there was a need to have consistent data based on the 990 forms, many possible institutions were left out of being part of the test group. Although all museums follow missions, not all of them submit 990 forms. As described earlier, the J. Paul Getty Museum was not used as one of the universal museums because of its connection to the J. Paul Getty Trust, which did not require submitting the same forms as the museums in this study. Similarly, large institutions like the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, and the Smithsonian Institution were not used for the test. These museums are non-profit institutions but because they are connected to the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard University respectively, and the Government of the United States administers the last one, their designations are different from the 501(c)(3) status that the rest of the universal museums and test group.

Other differences or similarities may have appeared if they had been added to the test group or if they were grouped together to create a second non-501(c)(3)-status test group.

To expand on the topics covered further research is possible. Using a similar framework, institutions from the United States and Europe could be compared and contrasted. Instead of using just mission statements and financials from 990 forms, comparing educational materials, collection policies, and repatriation policies could also help to expand on this research.

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## ***VIII. Appendix: Mission and Value Statements***

Mission Statements, accessed on March 4, 2014

### **The Art Institute of Chicago**

The Art Institute of Chicago collects, preserves, and interprets works of art of the highest quality, representing the world's diverse artistic traditions, for the inspiration and education of the public and in accordance with our profession's highest ethical standards and practices.

<http://www.artic.edu/about/mission-and-history>

### **Cleveland Museum of Art**

The mission of the Cleveland Museum of Art is to fulfill its dual roles as one of the world's most distinguished comprehensive art museums and one of northeastern Ohio's principal civic and cultural institutions. The museum, established in 1913 "for the benefit of all the people forever,"<sup>1</sup> seeks to bring the pleasure and meaning of art to the broadest possible audience in accordance with the highest aesthetic, intellectual, and professional standards. Toward this end the museum augments, preserves, exhibits, and fosters understanding of the outstanding collections of world art it holds in trust for the public and presents complementary exhibitions and programs. The Cleveland Museum of Art embraces its leadership role in collecting, scholarship, education, and community service.

<http://www.clevelandart.org/about/history-and-mission/mission-statement>

### **Guggenheim Museum**

Committed to innovation, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation collects, preserves, and interprets modern and contemporary art, and explores ideas across cultures through dynamic curatorial and educational initiatives and collaborations. With its constellation of architecturally and culturally distinct museums, exhibitions, publications, and digital platforms, the foundation engages both local and global audiences.

<http://www.guggenheim.org/guggenheim-foundation/mission-statement>

### **Los Angeles County Museums of Art**

To serve the public through the collection, conservation, exhibition, and interpretation of significant works of art from a broad range of cultures and historical periods, and through the translation of these collections into meaningful educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the widest array of audiences.

<http://www.lacma.org/overview>

## **Metropolitan Museum of Art**

The mission of The Metropolitan Museum of Art is to collect, preserve, study, exhibit, and stimulate appreciation for and advance knowledge of works of art that collectively represent the broadest spectrum of human achievement at the highest level of quality, all in the service of the public and in accordance with the highest professional standards.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-museum/mission-statement>

## **Museum of Modern Art**

Founded in 1929 as an educational institution, The Museum of Modern Art is dedicated to being the foremost museum of modern art in the world.

Through the leadership of its Trustees and staff, The Museum of Modern Art manifests this commitment by establishing, preserving, and documenting a permanent collection of the highest order that reflects the vitality, complexity and unfolding patterns of modern and contemporary art; by presenting exhibitions and educational programs of unparalleled significance; by sustaining a library, archives, and conservation laboratory that are recognized as international centers of research; and by supporting scholarship and publications of preeminent intellectual merit.

Central to The Museum of Modern Art's mission is the encouragement of an ever-deeper understanding and enjoyment of modern and contemporary art by the diverse local, national, and international audiences that it serves.

To achieve its goals The Museum of Modern Art recognizes:

- That modern and contemporary art originated in the exploration of the ideals and interests generated in the new artistic traditions that began in the late nineteenth century and continue today.
- That modern and contemporary art transcend national boundaries and involve all forms of visual expression, including painting and sculpture, drawings, prints and illustrated books, photography, architecture and design, and film and video, as well as new forms yet to be developed or understood, that reflect and explore the artistic issues of the era.
- That these forms of visual expression are an open-ended series of arguments and counter arguments that can be explored through exhibitions and installations and are reflected in the Museum's varied collection.
- That it is essential to affirm the importance of contemporary art and artists if the Museum is to honor the ideals with which it was founded and to remain vital and engaged with the present.
- That this commitment to contemporary art enlivens and informs our evolving understanding of the traditions of modern art.

- That to remain at the forefront of its field, the Museum must have an outstanding professional staff and must periodically reevaluate itself, responding to new ideas and initiatives with insight, imagination, and intelligence. The process of reevaluation is mandated by the Museum's tradition, which encourages openness and a willingness to evolve and change.

In sum, The Museum of Modern Art seeks to create a dialogue between the established and the experimental, the past and the present, in an environment that is responsive to the issues of modern and contemporary art, while being accessible to a public that ranges from scholars to young children.

<https://www.moma.org/about/index>

### **Museum of Fine Arts Boston**

The Museum of Fine Arts houses and preserves preeminent collections and aspires to serve a wide variety of people through direct encounters with works of art.

The Museum aims for the highest standards of quality in all its endeavors. It serves as a resource for both those who are already familiar with art and those for whom art is a new experience. Through exhibitions, programs, research and publications, the Museum documents and interprets its own collections. It provides information and perspective on art through time and throughout the world.

The Museum holds its collections in trust for future generations. It assumes conservation as a primary responsibility which requires constant attention to providing a proper environment for works of art and artifacts. Committed to its vast holdings, the Museum nonetheless recognizes the need to identify and explore new and neglected areas of art. It seeks to acquire art of the past and present which is visually significant and educationally meaningful.

The Museum has obligations to the people of Boston and New England, across the nation and abroad. It celebrates diverse cultures and welcomes new and broader constituencies. The Museum is a place in which to see and to learn. It stimulates in its visitors a sense of pleasure, pride and discovery which provides aesthetic challenge and leads to a greater cultural awareness and discernment.

The Museum creates educational opportunities for visitors and accommodates a wide range of experiences and learning styles. The Museum educates artists of the future through its School. The creative efforts of the students and faculty provide the Museum and its public with insights into emerging art and art forms.

The Museum's ultimate aim is to encourage inquiry and to heighten public understanding and appreciation of the visual world.

<http://www.mfa.org/about/mission-statement>

## **Philadelphia Museum of Art**

The Philadelphia Museum of Art, in partnership with the city, the region, and art museums around the globe, seeks to preserve, enhance, interpret, and extend the reach of its great collections in particular, and the visual arts in general, to an increasing and increasingly diverse audience as a source of delight, illumination and lifelong learning.

<http://www.guidestar.org/organizations/23-1365388/philadelphia-museum-art.aspx>

## **Whitney Museum of American Art**

The Whitney seeks to be the defining museum of 20th and 21 st century American art the museum collects, exhibits, preserves, re searches and interprets art of the u s in the broadest global, historical and interdisciplinary contexts as the preeminent advocate for American art, we foster the work of living artists at critical moments in their careers the Whitney educates a diverse public through direct interaction with artists, oft en be fore their work has achieved general acceptance

<https://www.guidestar.org/organizations/13-1789318/whitney-museum-american-art.aspx>

## **Field Museum**

### **Preamble: Serving The Public As Educator**

The Field Museum is an educational institution concerned with the diversity and relationships in nature and among cultures. It provides collection-based research and learning for greater public understanding and appreciation of the world in which we live. Its collections, public learning programs, and research are inseparably linked to serve a diverse public of varied ages, backgrounds and knowledge.

### **Subject Matter Focus: Living Together On The Living Earth**

Combining the fields of Anthropology, Botany, Geology, Paleontology and Zoology, the Museum uses an interdisciplinary approach to increasing knowledge about the past, present and future of the physical earth, its plants, animals, people, and their cultures. In doing so, it seeks to uncover the extent and character of biological and cultural diversity, similarities and interdependencies so that we may better understand, respect, and celebrate nature and other people.

### **Collections: World-Wide Knowledge Database**

The Museum holds encyclopedic collections of biological and geological specimens and cultural objects as the data needed to understand the nature of - and conditions affecting - environmental and cultural change. In support of these collections, we also hold significant collections of books, periodicals, photographs, illustrations, computer data, archival and instructional material. Like a great research library, our collections of more than 20 million items are a crucial part of the

world's knowledge database for the sciences, humanities and the arts. The Museum holds the collections in trust for future generations. Over time, new knowledge is gleaned from the collections. Accordingly, the Museum must manage the collections to provide for both long-term conservation and access and make strategic additions to the collections pursuant to clearly defined objectives. In discharging its collection trusteeship, the Museum recognizes the special relationship it has with the people whose cultures and habitats are represented in the collections. We will nurture these special relationships so together we can enhance greater understanding of cultural traditions and environmental surroundings for the benefit of all humankind.

### **Public Learning: Offering Greater Understanding About Environments And People**

Unlike schooling, learning in a museum is self-motivated, self-directed, and can be lifelong. Unlike print and electronic media, information is communicated primarily through real, tangible objects. Museum learning usually takes place during leisure time and without the direction of a teacher. The exhibit is the principal avenue of learning. Exhibits are augmented by people-mediated programs and a visitor-oriented museum-wide staff which reaches out to assist all visitors. Services to schools and communities extend the museum experience to people beyond our walls. To stimulate a public sense of inquiry, curiosity and delight, our exhibits and programs are not only informative, but also entertaining and inspiring. We focus on critical environmental and cultural issues which are engaging and relevant to the public's daily lives and civic responsibilities. We must be a vital educational and recreational destination for both our local and world-wide communities.

### **Research: Explaining The Patterns And Processes That Shape The Living Earth**

The Museum maintains a vital program of basic research that continually stimulates active and pioneering uses of the collections. Seeking new knowledge and deriving new syntheses about the dynamic physical, biological and cultural patterns and processes that shape the living earth, Museum research centers on anthropology and the natural sciences of evolutionary and environmental biology and geology. All of the research programs are focused on the interrelationships among the earth, its environments, life and cultures and how they change over time. Our research methods use advanced technologies and encourage an interdisciplinary approach which combines the Museum's disciplinary breadth and small research staff into a uniquely imaginative and focused whole. Our basic research has direct linkages to research about conservational, ecological, biomedical and multicultural issues. The Museum and its staff communicate our research findings and ideas about the history of the planet by means of scholarly and general papers, oral presentations to scientific and public audiences, public exhibits and other learning programs.

### **Publics: Reaching Out**

The Field Museum serves diverse publics ranging from children, adults and families to the national and international research community. We reach out to our diverse publics and their changing educational needs. We have a special responsibility to reach out to the people of Chicago, neighboring communities and the State of Illinois. Our visitors should reflect the cultural, educational and economic diversity of the Chicago metropolitan area. We must work

collaboratively and sensitively with the people in our locality, country and world whose cultures and habitats are represented in our collections, research and public programs. In reaching out, the Museum must build on its long-standing tradition of "outreach" which takes its resources and programs to schools, parks and communities.

### **Linkages: Working With Others**

The Field Museum is a unique educational institution in a network of nearby and international educational institutions. We must work closely with neighboring schools, colleges, universities and research institutions to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of our collection-based research and public learning. We need to collaborate with other museums, environmental, cultural and recreational groups and organizations to fulfill our educational mission. The Museum has an obligation to seek out and collaborate with researchers and teachers who reside in the areas from which our collections come.

### **Center Of Understanding And Mutual Respect: Listening To Each Other**

The Museum subject matter directly relates to the great issues of the present and future: environmental and cultural diversity and their interrelationships. There are differing scholarly and public viewpoints on these concerns. While the Museum does not take institutional positions on these issues, it must serve as a center of free inquiry, a marketplace for multiple points of view on these matters. In doing so it serves as a forum where relevant controversy can be aired. In this way the Museum can be a "door in the wall" of our differences and inspire greater knowledge, understanding and respect for our varied natural environments and cultural heritages.

### **Public Service: Our Commitment**

We, the trustees, staff and volunteers of The Field Museum, are dedicated to public service. Together and individually we share a commitment to provide services and opportunities to our many publics. As an institution devoted to the study of diversity and relationships, we will practice diversity in our public contacts and staffing. We will nurture an environment of mutual respect which will extend to the public we serve. We will act ethically in our relations with the public and with each other. Collectively and individually we are committed to the mission of the Museum and our public service responsibilities.

<http://fieldmuseum.org/about/mission>

### **Seattle Art Museum**

SAM provides a welcoming place for people to connect with art and to consider its relationship to their lives. SAM is one museum in three locations: **SAM Downtown**, **Seattle Asian Art Museum** at Volunteer Park, and the **Olympic Sculpture Park** on the downtown waterfront. SAM collects, preserves and exhibits objects from across time and across cultures, exploring the dynamic connections between past and present.

<https://www.seattleartmuseum.org/aboutus/Governance.asp>

## **Peabody Essex Museum**

### Prologue

Founded in 1799 by America's first global entrepreneurs, the Peabody Essex Museum is a museum of international art and culture dedicated to connecting art to the world in which it is made.

### Mission

The mission of the Peabody Essex Museum is to celebrate outstanding artistic and cultural creativity by collecting, stewarding, and interpreting objects of art and culture in ways that increase knowledge, enrich the spirit, engage the mind, and stimulate the senses. Through its exhibitions, programs, publications, media, and related activities, PEM strives to create experiences that transform people's lives by broadening their perspectives, attitudes, and knowledge of themselves and the wider world.

### Collections

As the nation's oldest continuously operating museum, PEM was among the first museums in America to collect works of art and culture from around the world. Its collections of contemporary and historic American, Asian, Maritime, Oceanic, Native American, and African art and culture, as well as its archival library and historic American and Chinese houses, are among the finest of their kind. PEM is committed to meeting the highest professional standards in the development, management, care, and preservation of its collections.

### Interpretive Philosophy and Methods

Presentation and interpretation of outstanding contemporary and historical works of art and culture resides at the core of the museum's mission and methods. PEM presents and interprets works of art and culture in ways that connect art to the world in which it is made by creatively fusing art, culture, and history; connecting the past to the present by acquiring and exhibiting both contemporary and historical works; and encouraging people to discover and explore the rich interconnections among international artistic and cultural expressions and traditions. As a people-centered museum, PEM's resources are dedicated to providing compelling and meaningful experiences to diverse audiences. PEM aims to make a lasting and positive difference in the lives of the public it serves.

### Ethics and Professional Standards

PEM seeks to achieve the highest professional standards in caring for its collections, sharing its scholarly and creative efforts, and managing its financial and human resources. In doing so, PEM embraces and adheres to the standards and practices established by the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), the American Association of Museums (AAM), and the PEM Board of Trustees.

[http://www.pem.org/about/mission\\_vision](http://www.pem.org/about/mission_vision)

## Brooklyn Museum

The mission of the Brooklyn Museum is to act as a bridge between the rich artistic heritage of world cultures, as embodied in its collections, and the unique experience of each visitor. Dedicated to the primacy of the visitor experience, committed to excellence in every aspect of its collections and programs, and drawing on both new and traditional tools of communication, interpretation, and presentation, the Museum aims to serve its diverse public as a dynamic, innovative, and welcoming center for learning through the visual arts.

<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/about/mission.php>

## New Orleans Museum of Art

**MISSION:** The mission of the New Orleans Museum of Art is to inspire the love of art; to collect, preserve, exhibit and present excellence in the visual arts; to educate, challenge and engage a diverse public.

**VISION:** The guiding vision of the New Orleans Museum of Art is to advance its position as a premier national visual arts Museum vital to the cultural and educational life of our city, state and region.

### NOMA'S CORE VALUES

What do we believe in:

- **Quality.** We consistently strive for excellence in all that we do. Quality in art is our fundamental objective.
- **Community.** We endeavor to reach the largest and most diverse audience to enjoy and appreciate the benefits and treasures of the Museum.
- **Integrity.** We adhere to the highest ethical standards in all Museum policies and practices for the board, staff and volunteers.
- **Stewardship.** We professionally maintain the preservation, conservation, exhibition, scholarship and accessibility of the Collection.
- **Diversity.** We are committed to serving a diverse public through innovation, enrichment and inspiration for people of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- **Education.** We seek to promote the visual arts through innovative educational programs and learning experiences to ensure broad participation from both traditional and new audiences.
- **Stability.** We maintain economic stability through responsible financial planning and management, allowing NOMA to grow and accomplish its vision and mission for the future.
- **Creativity.** We celebrate creativity in all cultures and from all periods. We continuously set high standards through openness to new ideas from the community, staff and supporters.

- **Collaboration.** We recognize the importance of collaboration with other cultural, academic, scientific and professional communities to expand our reach, leverage our resources and diversify our audience.

<http://noma.org/pages/detail/80/Mission-Statement>

### **Museum of Fine Arts Houston**

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston is dedicated to excellence in collecting, exhibiting, preserving, conserving, and interpreting art for all people.

<http://www.guidestar.org/organizations/74-1109655/museum-fine-arts-houston.aspx>

### **Fine Art Museums of San Francisco**

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco have rendered over a century of public service in the arts, and it is our mission to extend and enhance that service well into this century. More specifically, our mission encompasses the following goals:

1. To present a range of exhibitions of highest quality which serve, are accessible to, and will draw broad audiences
2. To provide extensive and innovative art education programs for people of all ages and interests
3. To actively involve a diverse public in all of the museums' activities
4. To conserve the objects in our care
5. To collect new objects relevant to the collections through purchase and gift while affording a hospitable place for collectors in the community to donate art to the public with complete confidence
6. To research and publicize the collections through scholarly publishing
7. To maintain two museums outfitted to deliver exceptional visitor safety, comfort, and access as well as the environmental conditions necessary to preserve and protect art
8. To operate within our goals with state-of-the-art efficiency
9. To contribute to the economy and culture of San Francisco

In summary, the Fine Arts Museums continue to serve as one of the premier public institutions in the western United States, existing to provide its community and region with high quality exhibitions, programs, education and outreach, and to care for San Francisco's esteemed art collection.

<https://deyoung.famsf.org/about/about-fine-arts-museums-san-francisco>

### **Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

MOCA's mission is to be the defining museum of contemporary art. MOCA engages artists and audiences through an ambitious program of exhibitions, collection, education, and publication. MOCA identifies and supports the most significant and challenging art of its time, places it in

historical context, and links the range of the visual arts to contemporary culture. MOCA provides leadership by actively fostering and presenting new work, emerging media, and original scholarship.

[http://www.moca.org/museum/us\\_home.php?](http://www.moca.org/museum/us_home.php?)

### **Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago**

The mission of the MCA is to be an innovative and compelling center of contemporary art where the public can directly experience the work and ideas of living artists, and understand the historical, social, and cultural context of the art of our time.

The Museum boldly interweaves exhibitions, performances, collections, and educational programs to excite, challenge, and illuminate our visitors and to provide insight into the creative process.

The MCA aspires to engage a broad and diverse audience, create a sense of community and be a place for contemplation, stimulation, and discussion about contemporary art and culture.

<http://www2.mcachicago.org/about/>